

CLAYTON PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING
Monday, March 7, 2011
The Center of Clayton - Multipurpose Room B & C

The following members were present:

Alex Berger
Ira Berkowitz
Brad Bernstein
Mimi Deem
Marguerite Garrick

Judy Goodman
Rosemary Hardy
Jessie Hoagland
Omri Praiss
Eric Schneider
Mark Winings

Excused/Absent

Also present:

Patty DeForrest
Eric Gruenenfelder
Toni Siering
Susan Renard

Approval of Minutes: The minutes from the February 7, 2011 meeting were approved as read.

Dog Park – Shaw Park Option: Ms. DeForrest reviewed the Dog Park Site Evaluation presentation noting the Clayton Parks and Recreation Master Plan data, pros and cons of a Dog Park in Shaw Park and Shaw Park usage. The Master Plan states that Shaw Park is heavily used for various activities and is showing signs of overuse. In the 2007 Master Plan Survey 17% of residents said an off leash Dog Park was a priority. The rating did not indicate this project as a high priority. Shaw Park usage charts show the areas of the park where there are active and passive users. Over 50% of Shaw Park is developed programmed space and approximately 880 visitors use the park every day. The pros of a Dog Park include: satisfying an expressed need in the community, increase performance measures, parking would be available early in the morning, the location would not impact surrounding residents and it may reduce the number of off-leash dogs in Shaw Park. The cons of the Dog Park include: problems maintaining the grass, on-going maintenance costs, Shaw Park is already very actively programmed, the proposed site is located close to the future location of the Centennial Greenway Trailhead, will create parking issues, especially with the impact of the new playground and the site would affect rentals at the South Shelter.

Dog Park supporters discussed many reasons why they think Shaw Park is a great location for a Dog Park. Clayton residents said parking would not be an issue nine to ten months out of the year and during the busy times of the season Dog Park hours could be limited. Ms. DeForrest told the supporters parking can be an issue, especially when youth and adult leagues are in session. Ms. Deem said she is concerned about the location because more dogs may be off leash when leaving the Dog Park because it would be very close to the parking lot. Residents said good rules would be in place and that membership dues assist with the maintenance of the park. Clayton residents feel like they are not asking for much and the primary reasons the community would like a Dog Park is so their dogs can run free and their owners have a nice place to socialize.

Mr. Praiss said Shaw Park is the only place to have a Dog Park because the other areas considered failed primarily because residents raised concerns about a having a Dog Park in their neighborhood. Ms. Garrick expressed her concern about the appearance and the fact that a Dog Park would be where the new trailhead begins. Mr. Berger said he is not sure if Shaw Park is the right place for a Dog Park and he has some concern about people parking along Shaw Park Drive because it is a street that is not policed. All of the Commissioners agree that a Dog Park is a good idea, but the process is taking a long time because a suitable location has not been found.

Ms. DeForrest said we need to find additional land for a Dog Park. During a six month time period when the Shaw Park Master Plan was being discussed, a Dog Park in Shaw Park was not mentioned. The new walking trail and the Centennial Greenway Trailhead as well as a new nature garden are amenities planned for this location and a dog park would interfere with those plans.

Ms. Goodman mentioned that more dog owners are living in Clayton, so we have been searching and working hard to find land for some time. After the interstate 40 construction we were hopeful new land would be available. The difficulty with utilizing space in Shaw Park is that residents want to preserve existing green space. The only other idea is to have a Dog Park on Clayton School District property near Gay Field. Mr. Berger suggested looking at the other side of The Center of Clayton where the mulch pile is located. Ms. Hoagland said it would be hard to find a place to squeeze in a Dog Park in with the amount of limited green space in Clayton. She asked the audience who would drive to Shaw Park or who would walk and the majority would drive to the Dog Park. When Ms. Hoagland asked the Dog Park supporters why they would not drive seven minutes to University City to use their Dog Park the response was a Dog Park is about community and they want one in our community.

Mr. Praiss said the Commission needs to support a Dog Park and not resist it. Mr. Praiss made a motion to move forward with Shaw Park as the location for a Dog Park. The motion was not seconded. Ms. Deem said we should table the discussion for now until we see what impact the trail will have on Shaw Park. Mr. Praiss made a motion to develop a community wide survey asking residents if they would support a Dog Park in the proposed location of Shaw Park. Mr. Berkowitz seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Director's Report:

- **P & R Update** Parks and Rec staff will be at the Missouri Parks and Recreation Association (MPRA) conference next week. The City will receive three awards at the conference. Tim Hale, from Park Maintenance will receive the Support Staff Award, Mary Furfaro, our Inclusion Coordinator, is receiving the MUSCO Give-Bank Award for working with the underserved, and the Clayton Century Foundation is receiving the Citation Award for their public private partnership. Also, Ms. DeForrest will be sworn in at the awards banquet as President-Elect for MRPA. The Center will be a kick off site for the LVN2BWELL initiative on March 26, 9:30 am-1:00 pm. The free event is open to the public. Ms. Renard and her staff are working on the Sensory Garden. The CCF Arts Egg designed by local artist, Carol Fleming, has been installed in the garden. The wood courts at the Center will be replaced beginning in May; the work is estimated to take up to three months. Supervisors are getting the Tennis and Aquatic Center ready for the season. Shaw Park signage was presented to the BOA who supported forward with the design project.
- **Financial Report** - The City of Clayton's annual report was distributed to the Commission.
- **Hanley Park Project** - The City received a \$184,000 grant for the Hanley House shelter with restrooms. The City is going to pay \$20,000 for an architect to put together the design. There will be a public meeting to review the design in mid-April. . The cost of the project includes ADA improvements to the sidewalks. Residents are more receptive to the plan now because they realized the need for restrooms. Further, Ms. DeForrest will be speaking to some of the homeowners living in close proximity to the Hanley House.

Old Business / New Business: There is no new or old business to report.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Denise Ucinski